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To: Microsoft ATR **Date:** 1/27/02 2:37pm

Subject: Views on Microsoft and Bill Gates

If I Were Bill Gates Published in USA TODAY 1/24/00 by Michael J. Hurd Ph.D.

Poor Bill Gates. He doesn't know how to defend himself.

If I were Bill Gates, here is what I would say to defend myself:

I created a company. Millions upon millions of people want to buy my company's products. They do so freely and willingly -- often enthusiastically.

I never lied to my customers. I never held a gun to their heads. They bought from me of their own free will. My products have transformed the world. The billions I've made are small potatoes compared to the benefit the world has gained from my innovations.

It is true that I package together some of my products. But I created these products. It is my right to package and sell them any way I see fit. It is the equal right of individual consumers to shop elsewhere if they see fit. Many of them do. It's a competitive business, and I have no guarantee of always staying on top. In a free market, there are no guarantees.

Government is supposed to protect its citizens from the initiation of force and fraud. I am guilty of neither. Nobody even accuses me of it. It's not the government's place to decide when one particular company has made "too much" or "cornered the market." This is the consumer's job, not Janet Reno's or Bill Clinton's job.

There is no monopoly, so long as other companies are free to compete with me; and they are free to compete with me. Government should stop telling the public it's only "protecting" them. No such thing is true. If the truth be told, the government is protecting my competitors -- not the consumers. That's what this antitrust case is really all about.